In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of efficiently serving content in a distributed computing environment that comprises a network-attached storage system having a plurality of disk drives, comprising:

receiving usage metrics for a particular stored object; and

evaluating the received usage metrics to determine whether the particular stored object is stored in an appropriate one of the plurality of disk drives, and moving the object to another of the plurality of disk drives if not;

wherein the usage metrics are expected popularity values that are predicted by a content management system.

2.-3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are encoded in a Hypertext Transfer Protocol message header.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are encoded using syntax of a markup language.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 5, wherein the markup language is HTML ("Hypertext Markup Language").

7. (Original) The method according to claim 6, wherein the syntax comprises a "META" tag using an "HTTP-EQUIV" attribute syntax.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 6, wherein the syntax comprises a "META" tag using a "NAME" attribute syntax.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 6, wherein the syntax comprises a specially-denoted comment.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 5, wherein the markup language is XML ("Extensible Markup Language").

11.-13. (Canceled)

14. (Original) The method according to claim 4, wherein the usage metrics are encoded using one or more cookies.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are encoded in a Wireless Session Protocol message header.

16.-18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are received as meta-data on a file access message.

20.-26. (Canceled)

27. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are expressed as a mnemonic.

28. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are expressed as a scaled number.

29. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are expressed as a percentage of access requests.

30. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are expressed as an actual number of access requests.

31. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the usage metrics are expressed as a ranking.

32. (Currently Amended) A system for efficiently serving content in a distributed computing environment using a network-attached storage ("NAS") system having a plurality of disk drives, comprising:

means for receiving, by a component of the NAS system, usage metrics for a particular stored object; and

means for evaluating the received usage metrics to determine whether the particular stored object is stored in an appropriate one of the plurality of disk drives, and for moving the object to another of the plurality of disk drives if not;

wherein the usage metrics are expected popularity values that are predicted by a content management system.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for efficiently serving content using a network-attached storage ("NAS") system having a plurality of disk drives, the computer program product embodied on one or more computer-usable media and comprising:

computer readable program code that is configured to receive usage metrics for a particular stored object; and

computer readable program code that is configured to evaluate the received usage metrics to determine whether the particular stored object is stored in an appropriate one of the plurality of disk drives, and to move the object to another of the plurality of disk drives if not;

wherein the usage metrics are expected popularity values that are predicted by a content management system.

35. (Canceled)